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Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version

Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

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#### Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

Lindemann, G. (2006). The concept of freedom in North America in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with a brief comparison to the developments in Germany. *Totalitarismus und Demokratie*, 3(2), 203-229. <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-310588>

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# The Concept of Freedom in North America in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries with a Brief Comparison to the Developments in Germany

Gerhard Lindemann

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## Abstract

Religiöse, politische, geistige sowie wirtschaftliche Freiheit waren die Motive der nordamerikanischen Kolonisten für ihre Auswanderung aus Europa. Dort entwickelte sich rasch eine politisch-gesellschaftliche Freiheitskultur, die in der Amerikanischen Revolution ihren deutlichsten Ausdruck fand. Bis 1900 kam es zu einer Ausgestaltung des freiheitlichen demokratischen Verfassungsstaates mit einer kontinuierlichen Erweiterung der Bürgerrechte.

## I. Germany in the sixteenth and seventeenth Centuries

In relation to the current differences between Germany and the United States\* it is interesting to compare the development of the concept of freedom in both societies. The German reformation in the first half of the sixteenth century was a step towards a higher degree of religious freedom. Freedom was a keyword in Martin Luther's theological conception. His theory of justification, entitled the "reforming discovery", spoke of the unconditional acceptance of the sinful man by God.<sup>1</sup> Justification from God was understood as a process of personal libera-

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\* Cf. Gerhard Besier/Gerhard Lindemann, Im Namen der Freiheit. Die amerikanische Mission, Göttingen 2006.

1 Cf. Martin Brecht, Der rechtfertigende Glaube an das Evangelium von Jesus Christus als Mitte von Luthers Theologie. In: idem, Ausgewählte Aufsätze, vol. 1, Stuttgart 1995, p. 13-47; Matthias Kroeger, Rechtfertigung und Gesetz: Studien zur Entwicklung der Rechtfertigungslehre beim jungen Luther (Forschungen zur Kirchen- und Dogmengeschichte, 20), Göttingen 1968; Thorsten Jacobi, "Christen heißen Freie": Luthers Freiheitsaussagen in den Jahren 1515-1519 (Beiträge zur historischen Theologie, 101), Tübingen 1997.

tion with consequences for the life of the Church and the individual Christian.<sup>2</sup> Luther reduced the authority of the church by asserting that the gospel of justification could only be experienced by reading the Bible or hearing God's Word from the pulpit.<sup>3</sup> The young Luther postulated that Christian parishes should have the right to elect their ministers and to dismiss them if they did not preach the gospel in accordance with the Biblical word.<sup>4</sup> Eventually religious freedom was reduced to the right of the ruler of a regional territory to choose the Lutheran or the Catholic Church (Peace of Augsburg 1555). His subjects had to accept this decision, but were allowed to emigrate on religious grounds.<sup>5</sup>

In a recent study Peter Blickle has shown that Germans enjoyed the so-called "old freedoms" or privileges, such as the freedom of movement, marriage and free disposal of the proceeds of one's work. However, these rights did only concern the economic part of the classic human rights: the right to freedom of disposal and property. On the other hand, Blickle highlighted that in the early modern period the protest movement played an important role in the biblically founded concept of freedom in the sixteenth century.<sup>6</sup>

## II. The development of the tradition of freedom in the North American colonies

In early modern Europe there was a lack of freedom. In the seventeenth century people immigrated to North America because they hoped to lead a life in freedom<sup>7</sup> and to establish a new society without great restrictions.<sup>8</sup> In all North

2 Cf. Eberhard Jüngel, *Zur Freiheit eines Christenmenschen: Eine Erinnerung an Luthers Schrift* [1978]. In: idem, *Indikative der Gnade – Imperative der Freiheit: Theologische Erörterungen IV*, Tübingen 2000, p. 84–160.

3 Cf. Oswald Bayer, *Was macht die Bibel zur Heiligen Schrift? Luthers Verständnis der Schriftautorität*. In: Michael Krug/Ruth Lödel/Johannes Rehm (ed.), *Beim Wort nehmen – die Schrift als Zentrum für kirchliches Reden und Gestalten: Friedrich Mildenberger zum 75. Geburtstag*, Stuttgart 2004, p. 24–41.

4 Cf. Luther, *Daß eine christliche Versammlung oder Gemeine Recht und Macht habe, alle Lehre zu urteilen und Lehrer zu berufen, ein- und abzusetzen, Grund und Ursach aus der Schrift*. In: WA, 11 (401), p. 408–416.

5 Cf. Karl Brandt (ed.), *Der Augsburger Reichsfriede vom 15. September 1555: Kritische Ausgabe des Textes mit den Entwürfen und der königlichen Deklaration*, 2. edition Göttingen 1927; Axel Gotthard, *Der Augsburger Religionsfrieden (Reformationsgeschichtliche Studien und Texte, 148)*, Münster 2004.

6 Cf. Peter Blickle, *Von der Leibeigenschaft zu den Menschenrechten: Eine Geschichte der Freiheit in Deutschland*, Munich 2003.

7 Cf. on the whole question: Eric Foner, *The Story of American Freedom*, New York 1999; David Hackett Fischer, *Liberty and Freedom*, Oxford/New York 2005.

8 Cf. Roger Daniels, *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*, 2. edition New York 2002; Maldwyn Allen Jones, *American Immigration*, second edition Chicago 1992; Bernard Bailyn, *The Peopling of British North*

American colonies<sup>9</sup> representative assemblies of the people were established. They had less political rights than the English Parliament, but embodied the firm intention of self-government in the colonies.<sup>10</sup> Whereas the Southern colonies took up the British political system,<sup>11</sup> the North endeavoured to create a new society. Puritans immigrated to America because they suffered religious persecution in England. They were Congregationalists, who emphasised the autonomy of a single Christian parish and rejected any authority of a higher church.<sup>12</sup> Hence, the Mayflower Compact mentioned the authority of the English King, but did not speak of the Anglican Church. The competences of the state were reduced. The state should prove law and order, and protect and foster the common interests of the colonists.<sup>13</sup> The Puritans wanted to build a "New England" meaning a "better" England, which was intended to be an example to the "old England". John Winthrop planned to erect a "City upon a hill", a "Holy Commonwealth", which was intended to be an example for the whole world. The Puritan dominated colonies saw themselves as a clear counter system to England

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America: An Introduction, New York 1986; Marilyn C. Baseler, "Asylum for Mankind": America, 1607–1800, Ithaca, N. Y. 1998.

- 9 Cf. Hermann Wellenreuther, *Niedergang und Aufstieg: Geschichte Nordamerikas vom Beginn der Besiedlung bis zum Ausgang des 17. Jahrhunderts*, Munster 2000; idem, *Ausbildung und Neubildung: Die Geschichte Nordamerikas vom Ausgang des 17. Jahrhunderts bis zum Ausbruch der Amerikanischen Revolution 1775*, Hamburg 2001; Jack P. Greene/J. R. Pole (ed.), *Colonial British America: Essays in the New History of the Early Modern Era*, Baltimore/London 1984; R. C. Simmons, *The American Colonies: From Settlement to Independence*, Harlow 1976; Charles M. Andrews, *The Colonial Period of American History*, 4 vol., New Haven, Conn. 1934–1938.
- 10 Cf. Jack P. Greene, *The Quest for Power: The Lower Houses of Assembly in the Southern Royal Colonies, 1689–1776*, Chapel Hill, N.C. 1963; Warren M. Billings, *A Little Parliament: The Virginia General Assembly in the Seventeenth Century*, Richmond, Virg. 2004; Elmer I. Miller, *The Legislature of the Province of Virginia: Its Internal Development*, New York 1907, p. 135–153; David W. Jordan, *Foundations of Representative Government in Maryland, 1632–1715*, New York/Cambridge 1987.
- 11 Cf. Lois Green Carr/Philip D. Morgan (ed.), *Colonial Chesapeake Society*, Chapel Hill, N.C. 1988; James Horn, *Adapting to a New World: English Society in the Seventeenth-Century Chesapeake*, Chapel Hill, N.C. 1994; Numan V. Bartley (ed.), *The Evolution of Southern Culture*, Athens, Ga. 1988; Elizabeth Davidson, *The Establishment of the English Church in Continental American Colonies*, Durham, N.C. 1936; John F. Woolverton, *Colonial Anglicanism in North America*, Detroit 1984; Dell Upton, *Holy Things and Profane: Anglican Parish Churches in Colonial Virginia*, Cambridge, Mass. 1986.
- 12 Cf. Perry Miller/Thomas H. Johnson (ed.), *The Puritans*, 2 vol., 2. edition New York 1963.
- 13 Text: Henry S. Commager/Milton Cantor (ed.), *Documents of American History*, vol. I: To 1898, Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 1988, 15 f.; cf. Francis Dillon, *The Pilgrims*, Garden City, N.Y. 1975; George F. Willison, *Saints and Strangers: Being the Lives of the Pilgrim Fathers and Their Families, with Their Friends and Foes, and an Account of Their Posthumous Wanderings in Limbo, Their Final Resurrection and Rise to Glory, and the Strange Pilgrimages of Plymouth Rock*, New York 1945, esp. p. 112 f., 114, 145 f.; Azel Ames, *The Mayflower and Her Log, July 15<sup>th</sup> 1620–May 6<sup>th</sup> 1621, Chiefly From the Original Sources*, 2. edition Boston, Mass. 1907.

and her ruling political and religious perception; it was an extreme attempt and to a certain extent the last means of the emigrants, to bring about a change in mother land in order to save her from God's anger by establishing the new society "in the wilderness". Winthrop's thesis on the election of the American people, which should become one of the founding myths of the American collective identity, was expanded on thanks to the vision of the covenant. A part of the covenant vision was the divine gift of the land with the task to settle it. However, the covenant should only suffer settlers, who behave socially and in accordance with the community.<sup>14</sup> The Puritans derived the principle of local self-government from the Congregationalist ideal.<sup>15</sup> Their view of freedom was founded on the interests of the community.<sup>16</sup> Whereas in Massachusetts there was a great extent of religious intolerance,<sup>17</sup> the colonial charter of Rhode Island guaranteed the freedom of conscience. In the opinion of the founder of the colony, Roger Williams, one church, which was established and supported by the state authority, did not correspond with God's will. According to Williams the state had no

- 14 Cf. John Winthrop, *A Modell of Christian Charity: Written On Board the Arrabella* (1630). In: *Winthrop Papers*, vol. 2: 1623–1630, Boston 1931, p. 282–295, here 295; David Zaret, *The Heavenly Contract: Ideology and Organization in Pre-Revolutionary Puritanism*, Chicago, Ill. 1985; Stephen Brachlow, *The Communion of Saints: Radical Puritan and Separatist Ecclesiology, 1570–1625*, Oxford 1988; Francis J. Bremer, *The Puritan Experiment: New England Society From Bradford to Edwards*, rev. edition Hanover, N.H. 1995; Andrew Delbanco, *The Puritan Ordeal*, Cambridge, Mass. 1989; Alan Simpson, *Puritanism in Old and New England*, Chicago 1955.
- 15 Cf. Edmund S. Morgan (ed.), *Puritan Political Ideas, 1558–1794*, New York 1965; T. H. Breen, *The Character of the Good Ruler: A Study of Puritan Political Ideas in New England, 1630–1730*, New Haven, Conn. 1970.
- 16 Cf. Stephen Foster, *The Long Argument: English Puritanism and the Shaping of New England Culture, 1570–1700*, Chapel Hill, N.C. 1991; Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century*, Cambridge, Mass. 1954; Francis Tiffany Butts, *Perry Miller and the Ordeal of American Freedom*, Kingston, Ont. 1980; idem, *The Myth of Perry Miller*. In: *American Historical Review*, 87 (1982), p. 665–694.
- 17 Cf. Perry Miller, *Orthodoxy in Massachusetts, 1630–1650*, Boston 1959; Janice Knight, *Orthodoxies in Massachusetts: Rereading American Puritanism*, Cambridge, Mass. 1994; Stephen Foster, *New England and the Challenge of Heresy 1630 to 1660: The Puritan Crisis in Transatlantic Perspective*. In: *William and Mary Quarterly*, 38 (1981), p. 624–660; R. Robert G. Pope, *The Half-Way Covenant: Church Membership in Puritan New England*, Princeton, N.J. 1969; Charles E. Hambrick-Stowe, *The Practice of Piety: Puritan Devotional Disciplines in Seventeenth-Century New England*, Chapel Hill, N.C. 1982; Harry S. Stout, *The New England Soul: Preaching and Religious Culture in Colonial New England*, Oxford 1986; Selma R. Williams, *Divine Rebel: The Life of Anne Marbury Hutchinson*, New York 1981; Amy Scrager Lang, *Prophetic Woman: Anne Hutchinson and the Problem of Dissent in the Literature of New England*, Berkeley, Cal. 1987; David D. Hall (ed.), *The Antinomian Controversy, 1636–1638: A Documentary History*, 2. edition Durham, N.C. 1990, p. 199–388; Joan Kane Nichols, *A Matter of Conscience: The Trial of Anne Hutchinson*, Austin, Tex. 1993; Richard Weisman, *Witchcraft, Magic, and Religion in 17th-Century Massachusetts*, Amherst, Mass. 1984; David D. Hall (ed.), *Witch-hunting in Seventeenth-Century New England: A Documentary History, 1638–1692*, Boston 1991; Richard Godbeer, *The Devil's Dominion: Magic and Religion in Early New England*, Cambridge, U.K. 1992.

authority to prescribe its citizens membership of a church. The conscious lies outside the state's sphere of jurisdiction. Rhode Island became a germ cell of American religious freedom.<sup>18</sup>

In Pennsylvania the political order was devised according John Locke's concept of a social contract. Here the citizens committed themselves to only obey such laws, which they themselves approved. It was the task of the government to prevent infringements of the law and to protect the fundamental rights of the citizens i.e. property, active political participation and the involvement of citizens in the court by jurors.<sup>19</sup>

During the eighteenth century the number of European immigrants increased. They had various reasons for emigration such as religious persecution, lack of political freedom, compulsory military service or economic need. The American society distinguished itself with a high degree of mobility and dynamic. Efficiency and industriousness were considered as cardinal virtues. It seemed possible for everybody to achieve personal success and advancement. Meanwhile the eligible electorate had become much bigger than that in England.<sup>20</sup> However, the desire for freedom of the European immigrants was linked to the restriction or denial of civil rights of the Native<sup>21</sup> and African Americans.<sup>22</sup>

- 18 Cf. William G. McLoughlin, *Rhode Island: A Bicentennial History*, New York 1978; Dennis B. Fradin, *The Rhode Island Colony*, Chicago 1989; Sydney V. James, *Colonial Rhode Island: A History*, New York 1975; Carl Bridenbaugh, *Fat Mutton and Liberty of Conscience: Society in Rhode Island, 1636–1690*, Providence, R.I. 1974; Hans Rudolf Guggisberg, Roger Williams. In: idem, *Alte und Neue Welt in historischer Perspektive*, Bern 1973, p. 9–37; Perry Miller, *Roger Williams: His Contribution to the American Tradition*, Indianapolis, In. 1953; Cyclone Covey, *The Gentle Radical: A Biography of Roger Williams*, New York 1966; Edmund S. Morgan, *Roger Williams, the Church and the State*, New York 1967; Timothy L. Hall, *Separating Church and State: Roger Williams and Religious Liberty*, Urbana, Ill. 1998.
- 19 Cf. Mary Maples Dunn, *William Penn: Politics and Conscience*, Princeton, N.J. 1967, p. 32–64; Isaac Sharpless, *A History of Quaker Government in Pennsylvania*, 2 vol., Philadelphia 1888–1899; Joseph E. Illick, *Colonial Pennsylvania: A History*, New York 1976; S. K. Stevens, *Pennsylvania: Birthplace of a Nation*, New York 1964; Dennis B. Fradin, *The Pennsylvania Colony*, Chicago 1988; J. William Frost, *Pennsylvania Institutes Religious Liberty, 1682–1860*. In: *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 110 (1988), p. 327–347; Sally Schwartz, "A Mixed Multitude": The Struggle for Toleration in Colonial Pennsylvania, New York 1988.
- 20 Cf. Robert J. Dinkin, *Voting in Provincial America: A Study of Elections in the Thirteen Colonies, 1689–1776*, Westport, Conn. 1977.
- 21 Cf. Werner Arens/Hans-Martin Braun, *Die Indianer Nordamerikas: Geschichte, Kultur, Religion*, Munich 2004; Howard Meredith, *A Short History of the Native Americans in the United States*, Malabar, Fla. 2001; William Brandon, *The Rise and Fall of North American Indians: From Prehistory Through Geronimo*, Lanham, Md. 2003; Roger L. Nichols, *American Indians in U.S. History*, Norman, Okla. 2003; Michael H. Crawford, *The Origins of Native Americans: Evidence from Anthropological Genetics*, New York 2001; Philip Weeks (ed.), "They Made Us Many Promises": The American Indian Experience, 1524 to the Present, 2. edition Wheeling, Ill. 2002; Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest*, New York 1976, p. 30, 146; James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America*, New York/Oxford 1981; Peter Mancall,

Already in the seventeenth century there were harsh critics regarding black slavery. The Mennonites from Germantown<sup>23</sup> insisted on the establishment of the right of freedom of the body. They highlighted that the slaveholders themselves had come to America in search of freedom.<sup>24</sup> Already during the colonial period a specific Afro-American culture came into existence. It combined both African and European elements.<sup>25</sup>

The Anglo-American intellectual life was based on the European developments, but it also had its own accent. The centre of the American Enlightenment was in Philadelphia. In contrast to Europe the Enlightenment in North America was much more sober and more geared towards practice. Altogether it played a much lesser role. Predominantly English ideas were absorbed, while the French Enlightenment with its physiocratic and atheist ideas hardly met with approval. Influenced by the literature of the European Enlightenment the Americans developed a self-image of a simple, rural and unspoilt people.<sup>26</sup>

Benjamin Franklin was celebrated as a leading figure of the American Enlightenment. He concerned himself with the solutions to practical problems such as the invention of the lightening conductor. For him it was a question of the communication of useful information, which strove towards an educational process for the whole society. Frugality and the encouragement of autodidactic behaviour were his essential goals. Franklin embodied the triumph of the

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Deadly Medicine: Indians and Alcohol in Early America, Ithaca, N.Y. 1995; Dean R. Snow/Kim M. Lauphear, *European Contact and Indian Depopulation in the Northeast: The Timing of the First Epidemics*. In: *Ethnohistory*, 35 (1988), p. 15–33; Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Indians and English: Facing Off in Early America*, Ithaca, N.Y. 2000; Carla Pestana/Sharon Salinger (ed.), *Inequality in Early America*, Hanover, N.H. 1999.

- 22 Cf. David Eltis/David Richardson (ed.), *Routes to Slavery: Direction, Ethnicity and Mortality in the Transatlantic Slave Trade*, London 1999; Hugh Thomas, *The Slave Trade: The Story of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1440–1870*, New York 1997; Walter Johnson, *Soul by Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market*, Cambridge, Mass. 1999; David Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas*, Cambridge, U.K./New York 2000; Betty Wood, *The Origins of American Slavery: Freedom and Bondage in the English Colonies*, New York 1997; Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America*, Cambridge, Mass. 1998; Peter Kolchin, *American Slavery, 1619–1877*, New York 1993; Robert William Fogel (ed.), *Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery*, New York 1989; Alden T. Vaughan, *Roots of American Racism: Essays on the Colonial Experience*, New York/Oxford 1995.
- 23 Cf. Stephanie Grauman Wolf, *Urban Village: Population, Community, and Family Structure in Germantown, Pennsylvania, 1683–1800*, Princeton, N.J. 1976.
- 24 Cf. *The Earliest Protest Against Slavery: Resolutions of Germantown Mennonites*. February 18, 1868. In: H. S. Commager (ed.), *Documents I*, p. 37 f.
- 25 Cf. William D. Piersen, Jr., *Black Yankees: The Development of an Afro-American Subculture in Eighteenth-Century New England*, Amherst, Mass. 1988; Roger D. Abrahams, *Singing the Master: The Emergence of African American Culture in the Plantation South*, New York 1992.
- 26 Cf. Henry Farnham May, *The Enlightenment in America*, New York/Oxford 1976; Ernest Cassara, *The Enlightenment in America*, New York 1975.

Enlightenment over the darkness and the victory of reason over every form of unreason. His discoveries promised to liberate society from ignorance and superstition.

Additionally Franklin represented virtues, which were considered as characteristic of the American national character, e.g. farsightedness, intellectual flexibility, versatility, self belief, spirit, abstinence, a sense of justice and courage combined with a lack of awe for authority and an animosity for fantastic speculations. Franklin also embodied classical civil values, such as the appreciation of hard honest work and a harsh criticism of idleness. He was a prototype of the American "self-made man", whose wealth was more the result of his initiative than his inheritance. Nevertheless, he was not irreligious, he confessed to *Deism*, believed in God and immortality, however he could not accept the teaching of Christ's divinity or the superiority of Christianity above other religions. Franklin believed that religion was useful for the state because it teaches people appropriate moral behaviour. One serves God best, when one does something good for humanity.<sup>27</sup>

Between 1735 and 1755 the *Great Awakening* took place in North America. It was the replacement of Puritanism, which relied on the educated clergy, by Evangelicalism, which was close to the people. From then on those "awakened" henceforth understood the Christian belief as a religion based on experience. It individually approached the people and aimed at their personal decisions. Conversion was seen as a change in the human heart that God had achieved. Turning towards one's neighbour was an aspect closely connected to this new spiritual existence. The movement understood itself as the call of God, which spanned all churches. At the same time it crossed the colonial borders and acted irrespective of class, race and sex. It was responsible for the establishment of an all-protestant consciousness in North America, but also for the formation of a specific American Christianity. The movement did not only prove itself modern through new forms of preaching, but also through the use of the media of press, flyers and books.

Some of the "born again" (awakened) Christians in New England left their churches and formed Baptist or separate communities, to which people only gained access if they could tell of a conversion experience. In other areas new dynamic Christian churches sprung up. They primarily gained members from outside of the elite and included Slaves in some places. Some of the distinct characteristics of these parishes were individual initiative and the insistence of freedom from state influences.

27 Cf. Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*. Ed. Louis P. Masur, Boston 1993; H. W. Brands, *The First American: The Life and Times of Benjamin Franklin*, New York 2000; Douglas Anderson, *The Radical Enlightenment of Benjamin Franklin*, Baltimore, Md. 1997; Esmond Wright, *Franklin of Philadelphia*, Cambridge 1986; Ronald W. Clark, *Benjamin Franklin: A Biography*, New York 1983; Carl Van Doren, *Benjamin Franklin*, New York 1938; Nian-Sheng Huang, *Benjamin Franklin in American Thought and Culture, 1790-1990*, Philadelphia 1994.



The Great Awakening movement replaced the European state churches, which had previously been dominant. With its specific form of proclamation of the inherent dynamic it fulfilled the needs of the growing American society, which was generally based according to the market.<sup>28</sup> In the realm of society the Awakening promoted development away from traditional obedience to political competition. Nevertheless, in the majority of the American colonies no division of the state and church had taken place by the end of the colonial period and religious tolerance was generally still not anchored in the law.<sup>29</sup>

In New England a counter reaction was formed. Its most important representative was Charles Chauncy from Boston. This was the beginning of the movement towards a liberal Christianity, according to which divine revelation was subject to examination by human reason.<sup>30</sup>

### III. Independence and the Constitution

The French and Indian War (1756–1763) made a decisive contribution to the rise of American self-confidence. From now on the people were convinced they could provide their own security without support from abroad. The French and Indian War was considered as a struggle between freedom and tyranny.<sup>31</sup> Under the influence of the Great Awakening America was seen as the chosen people of God fighting against the Catholic enemy.<sup>32</sup>

The North American society had a deeply rooted democratic potential. Some reasons for this development were the wide distribution of property, the broad

28 Cf. R. Laurence Moore, *Selling God: American Religion in the Marketplace*, New York/Oxford 1994.

29 Cf. Richard L. Bushman (ed.), *The Great Awakening: Documents on the Revival of Religion, 1740–1745*, 2. edition Chapel Hill, N.C. 1989; Alan Heimert/Perry Miller (ed.), *The Great Awakening: Documents Illustrating the Crisis and Its Consequences*, Indianapolis 1967; Edwin S. Gaustad, *The Great Awakening in New England*, New York 1957; Alan Heimert, *Religion and the American Mind: From the Great Awakening to the Revolution*, Cambridge, Mass. 1966.

30 Cf. Edward M. Griffin, *Old Brick: Charles Chauncy of Boston, 1705–1787*, Minneapolis, Mi. 1980.

31 Cf. Seymour Schwartz, *The French and Indian War, 1754–1763. The Imperial Struggle for North America*, New York 1994; Lawrence H. Gipson, *The American Revolution as Aftermath of the Great War for Empire, 1754–1763*. In: *Political Science Quarterly*, 65 (1950), p. 86–104; Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in North America, 1754–1766*, New York 2000.

32 Cf. Nathan O. Hatch, *The Sacred Cause of Liberty: Republican Thought and the Millenium in Revolutionary New England*, New Haven 1977; idem, *The Democratization of American Christianity*, New Haven 1989; Ruth H. Bloch, *Visionary Republic: Millennial Themes in American Thought, 1756–1800*, Cambridge 1988.

possibilities of political participation, the weak power of an aristocratic stratum and religious denominationalism.<sup>33</sup>

After the war Britain tried to keep the colonies under stronger control than earlier.<sup>34</sup> The American colonists refused the British measures and chose the motto "freedom against tyranny". Freedom was seen as an essential principle and a natural right of man. The violation of freedom by the state authority caused the citizens to resist. The most prominent advocate of this position was Thomas Paine. The consequence of this position was the seizure and control of the governmental power by the people. The people could protect their freedom by building a civil society by means of social contract. According to John Locke civil or civic freedom was considered as the continuation of natural freedom. Freedom was only limited by the interests of the other members of society and was understood as a universal good with validity for all people. According to this idea of freedom the power of government ought to be restricted. The government had to protect the human right to life, freedom and property.<sup>35</sup>

Another element of this "radical" thought took up the republican ideals from ancient times and the Renaissance (Aristotle, Cicero, Machiavelli), according to

- 33 Cf. David S. Shields, *Oracles of Empire: Poetry, Politics, and Commerce in British America, 1690–1750*, Chicago, Ill. 1990; John Dunn, *Locke*, New York/Oxford 1984; John Bumsted, "Things in the Womb of Time": Ideas of American Independence 1633 to 1763. In: *William and Mary Quarterly*, 31 (1974), p. 533–564; Alice Henson Jones, *Wealth of a Nation to Be: The American Colonies on the Eve of the Revolution*, New York 1980; Cary Carson/Ronald Hoffman/Peter J. Albert (ed.), *Of Consuming Interests: The Style of Life in the Eighteenth Century*, Charlottesville, Va. 1994; Margaret Ellen Newell, *From Dependency to Independence: Economic Revolution in Colonial New England*, Ithaca, N.Y. 1988; Jon Butler, *Becoming America: The Revolution Before 1776*, Cambridge, Mass. 2000.
- 34 Cf. Joseph Albert Ernst, *Money and Politics in America, 1755–1775: A Study in the Currency Act of 1764 and the Political Economy of Revolution*, Chapel Hill, N.C. 1973; idem, *Genesis of the Currency Act of 1864: Virginia Paper Money and Protection of British Investments*. In: *William and Mary Quarterly*, 22 (1965), p. 33–74; John J. McCusker, *Rum and the American Revolution: The Rum Trade and the Balance of Payments of the Thirteen Continental Colonies*, New York 1989; Edmund S. Morgan (ed.), *Prologue to Revolution: Sources and Documents on the Stamp Act Crisis, 1764–1766*, Chapel Hill, N.C.: 1959; idem/Helen M. Morgan, *The Stamp Act Crisis: Prologue to Revolution*, 2. edition New York 1963; John L. Bullion, *A Great and Necessary Measure: George Grenville and the Genesis of the Stamp Act, 1763–1775*, Columbia, Miss. 1982; Peter David Garner Thomas, *British Politics and the Stamp Act Crisis: The First Phase of the American Revolution, 1763–1767*, Oxford 1975.
- 35 Cf. Thomas L. Pangle, *The Spirit of Modern Republicanism: The Moral Vision of the American Founders and the Philosophy of Locke*, Chicago 1988; Richard Ashcraft, *Revolutionary Politics and Locke's Two Treatises of Government*, Princeton, N.J. 1986; Jerome Huyler, *Locke in America: The Moral Philosophy of the Founding Era*, Lawrence, Kans. 1995; Ronald Hamowy, *Cato's Letters, John Locke, and the Republican Paradigm*. In: *The History of Political Thought*, 11 (1990), p. 273–294; Adam Seligman, *The Idea of Civil Society*, New York 1992; Julian S. Franklin, *John Locke and the Theory of Sovereignty*, Cambridge 1978; Joyce Appleby, *The Social Origins of American Revolutionary Ideology*. In: *Journal of American History*, 64 (1978), p. 939–958.

which man is only able to fulfil himself by active participation in political life. The ideal man is virtuous, not corrupt and primarily acts in the public interest and not with private and selfish aims.<sup>36</sup> However, there were also “loyalists”, called the “Tories”. They understood freedom as a good, which was granted to the subjects by the government or the rulers.<sup>37</sup> A middle position was held by the so-called “Whig wings”, whose most prominent advocate was John Adams.<sup>38</sup> They connected freedom with the stability, property, the idea of individual competition and equal opportunities.

Both the republican and the liberal idea of freedom, brought about a change in the mentality of the people. The Americans increasingly understood themselves as actively acting subjects. They no longer considered their lives as part of unalterable external events. Instead they placed importance on personal initiative and confidence in the individual abilities and competences. One had the possibility to take his life in his own hands. This way of thinking had clear political consequences; the government only had the right to take taxes from the fruits of honest labour if the citizens agreed.

The American idea of freedom connected ethic ideals with material interests. Freedom and property were both considered as values that were worth defending. “Liberty” became the key word of the American Revolution. This term in its classical meaning connected freedom with independence. For example the inhabitants of Boston understood freedom both as the individual right to private property and as the collective right to self-administration and legality. Freedom was more than a simple idea, it became a passion.

During the revolution<sup>39</sup> some symbols for freedom emerged. One of them was the liberty bell, which originated from the Quaker town of Philadelphia. The Quakers considered freedom as a gift from God, a light, which God gave all creatures and not only a circle of elected people. This godly present obliged people to live in peace and not to suppress each other. The Quakers wanted to spread

36 Cf. J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition*, Princeton, N.J. 1975; M. N. S. Sellers, *American Republicanism: Roman Ideology in the United States Constitution*, New York 1994.

37 Cf. Robert McCluer Calhoun, *The Loyalists in Revolutionary America, 1760–1781*, New York 1973; idem, *The Loyalist Perception and Other Essays*, Columbia, S.C. 1989; Harold B. Hancock, *The Loyalists in Revolutionary Delaware*, Newark 1977; William H. Nelson, *The American Tory*, Oxford 1961.

38 Cf. David McCullough, *John Adams*, New York 2001; John E. Ferling, *John Adams: A Life*, Knoxville, Tn. 1992.

39 Cf. Jack P. Greene/Jack Richon Pole (ed.), *A Companion to the American Revolution*, Malden, Mass./Oxford [2000] 2004; Edward Countryman, *The American Revolution*, Harmondsworth 1987; Robert Middlekauff, *The Glorious Cause. The American Revolution, 1763–1789*, New York/Oxford 1982; Horst Dippel, *Die Amerikanische Revolution, 1763–1787*, Frankfurt a. M. 1985; Hans-Christoph Schröder, *Die Amerikanische Revolution*, Munich 1982.

rights, which they had secured for themselves, to other people. A bell audible for everybody corresponded to these ideals.<sup>40</sup>

In its Declaration of Colonial Rights and Grievances the First Continental Congress postulated the validity of “natural” human rights and a universal concept of freedom.<sup>41</sup> Meanwhile the readiness grew to protect freedom by fighting for it with troops. In a speech at the Virginia Convention on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1775 Patrick Henry coined the phrase “give me liberty or give me death”. It might be necessary to risk one’s own life for the preservation of freedom.<sup>42</sup> Thomas Paine put this position in a concrete form by postulating the independence of the colonies from England, which was as corrupt as the Pharaoh of Egypt in Moses’ times. The Biblical Exodus story, which Paine mentioned, was considered as a process of liberation from serfdom. A just Republic should substitute the British colonial power. Again, Paine referred to the Old Testament. The prophets had rejected the Jewish monarchy. Paine considered America as the only place where the principle of universal freedom would be able to plant roots.<sup>43</sup> The American Declaration of Independence considered life, freedom and the pursuit of happiness as unalienable rights of the people, who have been created equal.<sup>44</sup> The text is traced back to a draft from Thomas Jefferson, a 33-year-old lawyer and landowner from Virginia. Right at the beginning the declaration formulated the claim that North America should take an independent and equal place alongside

40 Cf. Olga W. Hall-Quest, *The Bell That Rang for Freedom: The Liberty Bell and Its Place in American History*, New York 1965.

41 Cf. Jack N. Rakove, *The Beginnings of National Politics: An Interpretive History of the Continental Congress*, New York 1979; Edmund Cody Burnett, *The Continental Congress*, New York 1941.

42 Cf. William Wirt Henry, *Patrick Henry: Life, Correspondence, and Speeches*, vol. 1, repr., New York 1966 [1891], p. 254–256; Henry Mayer, *A Son of Thunder: Patrick Henry and the American Republic*, New York 1986.

43 Cf. Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*. Ed. by Tony Benn, London 2000; Eric Foner, *Tom Paine and Revolutionary America*, New York/Oxford 1976; Mark Philp, *Paine*, New York/Oxford 1989; John Keane, *Tom Paine: A Political Life*, Boston 1995; Gregory Claeys, *Thomas Paine: Social and Political Thought*, Boston 1989; A. Owen Aldridge, *Thomas Paine’s American Ideology*, Newark 1984; Jack Fruchtman, Jr., *Thomas Paine: Apostle of Freedom*, New York 1994; idem, *Thomas Paine and the Religion of Nature*, Baltimore 2003; Jack P. Greene, *Paine, America, and the Modernization of Political Consciousness*. In: *Political Science Quarterly*, 93 (1978), p. 73–92; Stephen Newman, *A Note on Common Sense and Christian Eschatology*. In: *Political Theory*, 6 (1978), p. 101–108.

44 *The Declaration of Independence*. In: H. S. Commager a. o. (ed.), *Documents I*, p. 100–103; cf. Pauline Maier, *American Scripture: Making the Declaration of Independence*, New York 1997; Julian P. Boyd, *The Declaration of Independence: The Evolution of the Text*, rev. ed. by Gerard W. Gawalt, Washington, D.C./London 1999; Allen Jayne, *Jefferson’s Declaration of Independence*, Lexington, Ky. 1998; Garry Wills, *Inventing America: Jefferson’s Declaration of Independence*, New York 1978; Jay Fliegelman, *Declaring Independence: Jefferson, Natural Language and the Culture of Performance*, Stanford, Cal. 1993; John H. Hazelton, *The Declaration of Independence: Its History*, New York 1906.

the “Powers of the Earth”.<sup>45</sup> The self-characterisation as one of the “Powers of the Earth” spoke of an extremely great self-confidence. This claim was founded on natural and divine laws. Life, freedom and the pursuit of happiness were classed as unalienable rights of men, who have been created equal. The American struggle for independence provided official legitimisation with this proclamation.

At the same time the continental congress bade farewell to the previous line of the movement, according to which the right to freedom called on the definition from the English constitution and the rights of the British citizens. The right of freedom was essentially to defend oneself against the British establishment and the English parliament. As a result of the influence of the independence movement the understanding of freedom changed from a defensive understanding into a positive, forward moving and dynamic concept. The “United Colonies” already understood themselves as free and independent states. They firmly believed in the “protection of Divine Providence”.<sup>46</sup>

The rights, which are proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence, do not call on the English constitution but on “self-evident truths”.<sup>47</sup> It is a matter of natural and universal truths. As independent citizens, the former sons of Great Britain now regarded the inherited freedom as the true guarantor of freedom. A nation was born out of this understanding. Sovereignty was not longer granted by the King and the English parliament but by the American people. The citizens of America had granted themselves freedom, this maxim was to become an essential element of the American freedom myth. However, freedom touched on geographical preconditions. There was a great physical distance between America and Europe. The Ocean was regarded as a natural bulwark given by God, against all attempts to suppress America from other parts of the earth. The great natural resources of the vast continent were a sufficient basis to be able to insure economical independence. Additionally, it provided the people with freedom from economic exploitation. This concept of freedom was no longer defensive, but positively defined, improving and full of dynamic. The citizens of America had defined freedom themselves.

The freedom that America had gained was considered as the start of a great future for the whole of mankind.<sup>48</sup> The Americans were convinced that their new concept of freedom would reach the whole world. This was a great vision of freedom.<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, the basic for another characteristic of the American understanding of freedom was laid: its dynamic.<sup>50</sup>

45 Cf. The Declaration of Independence. In: H. S. Commager (ed.), Documents I, p. 100–103, here 100.

46 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 102.

47 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 100.

48 Cf. Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, e.g. p. 3, 22.

49 Cf. Elise Marienstras, *Nous le peuple: Les origines du nationalisme américain*, Paris 1988; David Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fêtes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776–1820*, Chapel Hill, N.C. 1997; Wilbur Zelinsky, *Nation Into State:*

The text of the Declaration quickly spread throughout the land and was received with great enthusiasm. It came to spontaneous celebrations with rituals, which had previously only been used for the birthday of the English King, in the form of fireworks, illuminations, the firing of canons, the ringing of bells, military parades, celebratory processions of the people, speeches and meals. New additions included the public reading of the document and speeches on the meaning of freedom. Many Americans hung a copy of the printed Declaration of Independence in their homes. The document, which quickly became a national icon, intended to always remind them that they were citizens of a free republic and the personal advantages, which came from it. Moreover the Declaration of Independence did not enter the nation's collective memory as the work of an individual but rather as a document passed by the American national representation.

In the battles during the War of Independence the motto "Liberty or Death" became a wide spread battle cry. The ideal of freedom was considered as worthier than life alone.<sup>51</sup> In the former colonies there was a great movement to create constitutions for the new states. They connected the concept of freedom with the concept of equality, which was valid at least for the free citizens. It did not only mean equal legal and political rights, but also equal economic chances.<sup>52</sup> This

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The Shifting Symbolic Foundations of American Nationalism, Chapel Hill, N.C. 1997; Max Savelle, *Nationalism and Other Loyalties in the American Revolution*. In: *American Historical Review*, 67 (1962), p. 901–923.

- 50 Also Thomas Jefferson to James Madison on 30.8.1823. In: Paul L. Ford (ed.), *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 10, New York 1899, p. 266–269; Jefferson to Henry Lee of 8.5.1825. In: *ibid.*, p. 342 f.; Jefferson to James Mease of 26.9.1825. In: Andrew Adgate Lipscomb/Albert Ellery Bergh (ed.), *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 16, Washington, D.C. 1905, p. 122 f.
- 51 Cf. Don Higginbotham, *The War of American Independence: Military Attitudes, Policies, and Practice, 1763–1789*, New York 1971; Piers Mackesy, *The War for America, 1775–1783*, Cambridge, Mass. 1964; John Shy, *A People Numerous and Armed: Reflections on the Military Struggle for American Independence*, rev. ed., Ann Arbor, Mich. 1990; Charles Royster, *A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Character, 1775–1783*, Chapel Hill, N.C. 1979; Richard Buel, Jr., *Dear Liberty: Connecticut's Mobilization for the Revolutionary War*, Middletown, Conn. 1980.
- 52 Cf. Merrill Jensen, *Democracy and the American Revolution*. In: *Huntingdon Library Quarterly*, 20 (1957), p. 321–341; Michael Kammen (ed.), *The Origins of the American Constitution: A Documentary History*, New York 1986; Donald S. Lutz, *The Origins of American Constitutionalism*, Baton Rouge, La. 1988; Ronald M. Peters, Jr., *The Massachusetts Constitution of 1780: A Social Compact*, Amherst, Mass. 1978; Donald S. Lutz, *Popular Consent and Popular Control: Whig Political Theory in the Early Constitutions*, Baton Rouge, La. 1980; Jackson Turner Main, *Government by the People: The American Revolution and the Democratization of the Legislatures*. In: *William and Mary Quarterly*, 23 (1966), p. 391–406; J. Paul Selsam, *The Pennsylvania Constitution of 1776: A Study in Revolutionary Democracy*, New York 1971; Willi Paul Adams, *The First American Constitutions: Republican Ideology and the Making of the State Constitutions in the Revolutionary Era*, 2. edition Chapel Hill, N.C. 1993; George Dargo, *Roots of the Republic: A New Perspective on Early American*

development lead to the decision of the majority of the Northern states to gradually abolish slavery. However, in the South the concept of freedom was constructed in a hierarchical way. Edmund Burke declared that slavery clearly showed the masters that their own freedom was a valuable good.<sup>53</sup>

The principles of freedom became amendments to the American Constitution in the "Bill of Rights".<sup>54</sup> Religious freedom was and remains the *First Liberty*. The establishment of an official state religion was forbidden. Nobody should be prevented from exercising his right to practice his personal religion in a free way.<sup>55</sup> The right of free speech,<sup>56</sup> free press and participation in peaceful assemblies were also unchangeable rights.

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Constitutionalism, New York 1974; Jackson Turner Main, *The Sovereign States, 1775–1783*, New York 1973; Allan Nevins, *The American States During and After the Revolution, 1775–1789*, New York 1969; William J. Brennan, Jr., *State Constitutions and the Protection of Individual Rights*. In: *Harvard Law Review*, 90 (1977), p. 489–504.

- 53 Cf. Ruth Bogin, *Abraham Clark and the Quest for Equality in the Revolutionary Era*, Rutherford, N.J. 1982; David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution, 1770–1823*, 2. edition Oxford 1999; John P. Kaminsky (ed.), *A Necessary Evil? Slavery and the Debate Over the Constitution*, Madison, Wis. 1995; Gary B. Nash, *Race and Revolution*, Madison, Wis. 1990; Ira Berlin/Ronald Hoffman (ed.), *Slavery and Freedom in the Age of the American Revolution*, Charlottesville, Va. 1983; Duncan J. McLeod, *Slavery, Race and the American Revolution*, London 1974; Roger Bruns (ed.), *Am I Not a Man and a Brother: The Antislavery Crusade of Revolutionary America, 1688–1788*, New York 1977; James D. Essig, *The Bonds of Wickedness: American Evangelicals Against Slavery, 1770–1808*, Philadelphia 1982; Dee Andrews, *The Methodists and Revolutionary America, 1760–1800: The Shaping of an Evangelical Culture*, Princeton, N.J. 2000; Rachel N. Klein, *Unification of a Slave State: The Rise of the Planter Class in the South Carolina Backcountry, 1760–1808*, Chapel Hill, N.C. 1990; Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the American Revolution*, Chapel Hill, N.C. 1961; Marvin L. Michael Kay/Lorin Lee Cary, *Slavery in North Carolina, 1748–1775*, Chapel Hill, N.C. 1995.
- 54 Cf. Helen E. Veit/Kenneth R. Bowling/Charlene Bangs Bickford (ed.), *Creating the Bill of Rights: The Documentary Record From the First Federal Congress*, Baltimore 1991; George Anastaplo, *The Amendments to the Constitution: A Commentary*, Baltimore 1995; Akhil Reed Amar, *The Bill of Rights: Creation and Reconstruction*, New Haven, Conn./London 1998; Jack N. Rakove, *Declaring Rights: A Brief History with Documents*, Boston 1998; Leonard W. Levy, *Origins of the Bill of Rights*, New Haven, Conn. 1999; Robert Allen Rutland, *The Birth of the Bill of Rights, 1776–1791*, rev. ed., Boston 1983; Bernard Schwartz, *The Roots of the Bill of Rights*, 5 vol., New York 1980; Irving Brant, *The Bill of Rights: Its Origin and Meaning*, Indianapolis 1965.
- 55 Cf. Gerhard Besier, "The First of Our Liberties ... a Lustre to Our Country." Zum Verständnis der Religionsfreiheit in den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika. In: idem, *Religionsfreiheit und Konformismus: Über Minderheiten und die Macht der Mehrheit*, Münster 2004, p. 27–48; Thomas J. Curry, *The First Freedoms: Church and State in America to the Passage of the First Amendment*, New York/Oxford 1986; Frank Lambert, *The Founding Fathers and the Place of Religion in America*, Princeton, N.J. 2003; Francis Graham (ed.), *All Imaginable Liberty: The Religious Liberty Clauses of the First Amendment*, Lanham, Md. 1995; Leonard W. Levy, *The Establishment Clause: Religion and the First Amendment*, 2. edition Chapel Hill, N.C. 1994; Marvin E. Frankel, *Faith and Freedom: Religious Liberty in America*, New York 1994; Manfred Brocker (ed.), *God Bless America: Politik und Religion in den USA*,

Altogether much had been gained in the name of freedom. It was firmly anchored in the constitution and the Bill of Rights, connected to it. In the future these documents could be invoked if freedom was in danger.

Slaves, women and Native Americans in contrast could not call on the guaranteed freedoms for a long time.<sup>57</sup> The American concept of freedom remained limited for a long time although it should have continuously spread in a dynamic process of further development.

#### IV. Consequences for Germany?

The American Revolution triggered a number of revolutions on the European continent. This development lasted until 1848. In Europe there was a great wave of support for the events in America.<sup>58</sup> Enlightened Germans also welcomed the American idea of freedom. However, compared with France the principle of equality or human rights were not discussed particularly intensely.<sup>59</sup> During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the concept of freedom in Germany placed less emphasis on the personal rights of an individual, but referred to the liberties of political communities. Under the impression of the excessive after-effects of the French Revolution the German public preferred cautious reforms of society.<sup>60</sup> The Protestant shaped German Enlightenment saw in the religious renewal initiated by Luther a general promise of freedom, which was to be realised step by step. Prussia preferred reforms, which came from the government. The main supporters of these reforms were intended to be the cultivated civil servants, not the people.<sup>61</sup>

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Darmstadt 2005; James D. Hunter/Os Guinness (ed.), *Articles of Faith, Articles of Peace: The Religious Liberty Clauses and the American Public Philosophy*, Washington, D.C. 1990.

56 Cf. Thomas L. Tedford, *Freedom of Speech in the United States*, 2. edition New York 1993.

57 Cf. e.g. Jan Lewis, "Of Every Age Sex & Condition": The Representation of Women in the Constitution. In: *Journal of the Early Republic*, 15 (1995), p. 359–387.

58 Cf. Horst Dippel, Die Wirkung der amerikanischen Revolution auf Deutschland und Frankreich. In: Hans-Ulrich Wehler (ed.), *200 Jahre amerikanische Revolution und moderne Revolutionsforschung (Geschichte und Gesellschaft. Sonderheft, 2)*, Göttingen 1976, p. 101–121.

59 Cf. Horst Dippel, *Germany and the American Revolution, 1770–1800*, Chapel Hill 1977.

60 Cf. Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte*, vol. 1: *Vom Feudalismus des Alten Reiches bis zur defensiven Modernisierung der Reformära, 1700–1815*, third edition Munich 1996, p. 363–485.

61 Cf. Bernd Sösemann (ed.), *Gemeingeist und Bürgersinn: Die preußischen Reformen (Forschungen zur Brandenburgischen und Preußischen Geschichte, Beih., N. F., 2)*, Berlin 1993; Paul Nolte, *Staatsbildung als Gesellschaftsreform: Politische Reformen in Preußen und den süddeutschen Staaten, 1800–1820 (Historische Studien, 2)*, Frank-



During the Napoleonic Wars German nationalism arose. As there was no united national state in Germany, German nationalists thus thought that national unity should be a precondition of political freedom.<sup>62</sup> This was one of the reasons why the congress of Vienna restored the ancient political order.<sup>63</sup>

Freedom and unity constituted the political program of German liberalism in the "Vormärz" period between the revolutions of 1830 and 1848. In the eighteen-thirties freedom took precedence over unity. Most German liberals hoped for limited constitutional reforms or a Prussian hegemony. Some, especially from the Palatinate region, were advocates of the principle of peoples' sovereignty.<sup>64</sup> The celebration of Hambach in May 1832 postulated a free and democratic Germany, which should be established against the power of the royal rulers. However, the convention did not specify with what means the gathering people wanted to achieve their goals. Finally, this position was the feeling of a minority in German liberalism.<sup>65</sup> During the eighteen-forties the French threat to Germany taught the moderate liberals that the German question was mainly a question of power. To solve it, it was considered necessary to cooperate with Prussia.<sup>66</sup> This idea referred back to Hegel's theory that freedom meant the insight of a necessity.

In 1848 the simultaneous quest for national unity and liberty failed.<sup>67</sup> The following years saw a long period of decline in the liberal movement. Economic liberals proved to be daring industrialists and venturesome speculators on the stock markets, but they supported the conservative policy of the states not to in-

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furt a. M./New York 1990; Walther Hubatsch, *Die Stein-Hardenbergschen Reformen* (Erträge der Forschung, 65), Darmstadt 1977.

62 Cf. Otto W. Johnston, *The Myth of a Nation: Literature and Politics in Prussia Under Napoleon* (Studies in German Literature, Linguistics, and Culture, 32), Columbia, S. C. 1989; Hagen Schulze, *Staat und Nation in der europäischen Geschichte*, Munich 1994, 150 ff.; Jürgen Wilke, *Der nationale Aufbruch der Befreiungskriege als Kommunikationsereignis*. In: Ulrich Hermann (ed.), *Volk - Nation - Vaterland*, Hamburg 1996, p. 353-366.

63 Cf. Peter Burg, *Der Wiener Kongreß: Der Deutsche Bund im europäischen Staatensystem*, Munich 1984.

64 Cf. Hartwig Brandt, *Die Julirevolution (1830) und die Rezeption der "principes de 1789" in Deutschland*. In: Roger Dufraisse (ed.), *Revolution und Gegenrevolution 1789-1830: Zur geistigen Auseinandersetzung in Frankreich und Deutschland*, Munich 1991, p. 225-235.

65 Cf. Cornelia Foerster, *Das Hambacher Fest 1832: Demokratische Elemente in der frühliberalen Bewegung der bayerischen Pfalz*. In: Otto Borst (ed.), *Südwestdeutschland: Die Wiege der deutschen Demokratie*, Tübingen 1997, p. 116-132; idem, *Das Hambacher Fest 1832: Volksfest und Nationalfest einer oppositionellen Massenbewegung*. In: Dieter Düding (ed.), *Öffentliche Festkultur: Politische Feste in Deutschland von der Aufklärung bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg*, Reinbek bei Hamburg 1988, p. 113-131; Hubert Freilinger, *Die vorletzte Weisheit des Volkes: Der politische Aktionismus der Hambacher Bewegung und seine Grenzen*. In: *Hambach 1832: Anstöße und Folgen* (Geschichtliche Landeskunde, 24), Wiesbaden 1984, p. 33-59.

66 Cf. e.g. Manfred Meyer, *Freiheit und Macht: Studien zum Nationalismus süddeutscher, insbesondere badischer Liberaler, 1830-1848*, Frankfurt a. M. 1994, p. 193 ff.

67 Cf. Wolfram Siemann, *Die deutsche Revolution von 1848/49* (Moderne deutsche Geschichte, 5), Darmstadt 1998; Rüdiger Hachtmann, *Epochenschwelle zur Moderne:*

terfere in common affairs.<sup>68</sup> The German Empire of 1871 placed unity before freedom and bureaucratic-military strength before civil society. The Kaiserreich had a modern culture, a strong market economy, social dynamic and a high culture of justice, but there were also strong elements of illiberalism in the constitution, the society and the mentality. The German conservatives celebrated the victory of 1871 as the final defeat of the principles of the French Revolution. It was considered as a victory of the loyalty of subjects over the spirit of revolution, of the godly order over anarchy and of morality over immorality. The identity of nationalism also changed. Since 1878/79 it was no longer connected to the struggle for emancipation, but defended the political and social status quo against all positions, backing a greater degree of cosmopolitan attitudes, more freedom and more equality.<sup>69</sup>

## V. The further development in the democratic culture of freedom in the United States

Nevertheless, in the nineteenth century United States freedom made further progress. In the founding era of the republic, the Federalist period of the seven-teen-nineties,<sup>70</sup> it could be protected against Federalist efforts to restrict the freedom of press and free speech (Sedition Acts). The free press was strengthened and had become the fourth power of American democracy. Freedom of research and free expression of one's political opinion had become the strong democratic values of liberty.<sup>71</sup>

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Einführung in die Revolution von 1848/49 (Historische Einführungen, 9), Tübingen 2002.

68 Cf. Heinrich August Winkler, *Der lange Weg nach Westen*, vol. 1: Deutsche Geschichte vom Ende des Alten Reiches bis zum Untergang der Weimarer Republik, Munich 2000, p. 131–212.

69 Cf. e.g. Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte*, vol. 3: Von der "Deutschen Doppelrevolution" bis zum Beginn des Ersten Weltkrieges, 1849–1914, Munich 1995, part 6.

70 Cf. Reginald Horsman, *The New Republic: The United States of America, 1789–1815*, Harlow, U.K./New York 2000; Joseph J. Ellis, *Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation*, New York 2000; James Roger Sharp, *American Politics in the Early Republic: The New Nation in Crisis*, New Haven, Conn./London 1993; Stanley M. Elkins/Eric L. McKittrick, *The Age of Federalism: The Early American Republic, 1788–1800*, New York 1993; John C. Miller, *The Federalist Era, 1789–1801*, New York 1960; Doron Ben-Atar/Barbara Oberg (ed.), *Federalists Reconsidered*, Charlottesville 1998; Margaret C. S. Christman, *The First Federal Congress, 1789–91*, Washington, D.C. 1989; David P. Currie, *The Constitution in Congress: The Federalist Period, 1789–1801*, Chicago 1997.

71 Cf. Mark A. Smith, *Crisis, Unity, and Partisanship: The Road to the Sedition Act*, Ph.D., University of Virginia 1998; Richard W. Steele, *Free Speech in the Good War*, New York 1999; Lucas A. Powe, Jr., *The Fourth Estate and the Constitution: Freedom*

However, the anti-federalists under the leadership of Thomas Jefferson did not only expand personal freedoms.<sup>72</sup> Under their leadership the American Empire could celebrate its hour of birth. With the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 the territory of the “empire of freedom” (Jefferson) doubled.<sup>73</sup>

In the following decades the American concept of freedom was combined with two national myths: the manifest destiny and the idea of the frontier. The myth of the frontier constituted American exceptionalism, i.e. the readiness to accept new challenges and to conquer existing frontiers in the spirit of innova-

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of the Press in America, Berkeley 1991, 58–60; James Morton Smith, *Freedom’s Fetters: The Alien and Sedition Laws and American Civil Liberties*, Ithaca, N.Y. 1956; John C. Miller, *Crisis in Freedom: The Alien and Sedition Acts*, Boston 1952; Michael Kent Curtis, *Free Speech, “The People’s Darling Privilege”: Struggles for Freedom of Expression in American History (Constitutional Conflicts)*, Durham, N.C./London 2000, chap. 2; Leonard W. Levy, *Legacy of Suppression: Freedom of Speech and Press in Early America*, Cambridge, Mass. 1960; James Roger Sharpe, *American Politics in the Early Republic: The New Nation in Crisis*, New Haven, Conn. 1993; Leonard W. Levy, *Emergence of a Free Press*, New York/Oxford 1985, 297–310; Jeffrey L. Pasley, *“The Tyranny of Printers”: Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic*, New York 1989.

72 Cf. Henry Adams, *History of the United States of America During the Administrations of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison*, 2 vol., New York 1986; Marshall Smelser, *The Democratic Republic, 1801–1815*, New York 1968; Bernard A. Weisberger, *America Afire: Jefferson, Adams, and the Revolutionary Election of 1800*, New York 2000; Robert M. Johnstone, Jr., *The Jefferson Presidency: Leadership in the Young Republic*, Ithaca, N.Y. 1978; Forrest McDonald, *The Presidency of Thomas Jefferson*, Lawrence, Kans. 1976; Dumas Malone, *Jefferson the President*, Boston 1970; Joseph J. Ellis, *American Sphinx: The Character of Thomas Jefferson*, New York 1997; Noble E. Cunningham, Jr., *The Jeffersonian Republicans in Power: Party Operations, 1801–1809*, Chapel Hill, N.C. 1963; Robert J. Dinkin, *Campaigning in America: A History of Election Practices*, Westport, Conn. 1989; David Thomas Koenig (ed.), *Devising Liberty: Preserving and Creating Freedom in the New American Republic*, Stanford, Cal. 1995; Robert Allen Rutland, *The Presidency of James Madison*, Lawrence, Kans. 1990; Noble E. Cunningham, Jr., *The Process of Government Under Jefferson*, Princeton, N.J. 1978.

73 Cf. Jon Kukla, *A Wilderness so Immense: The Louisiana Purchase and the Destiny of America*, New York 2003; Peter J. Kastor (ed.), *The Louisiana Purchase: Emergence of an American Nation*, Washington, D.C. 2002; Dolores Egger Labbé (ed.), *The Louisiana Purchase and Its Aftermath, 1800–1830*, Lafayette, La. 1998; Glenn R. Conrad (ed.), *The French Experience in Louisiana*, Lafayette, La. 1995; Gary E. Moulton (ed.), *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, 13 vol., Lincoln, Nebr. 1983–2001; Stephen E. Ambrose, *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West*, New York 1996; Dayton Duncan, *Lewis and Clark: An Illustrated History*, New York 1997; James P. Ronda (ed.), *Voyages of Discovery: Essays on the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, Helena, Mont. 1998; Alexander DeConde, *This Affair of Louisiana*, New York 1976; Merrill D. Peterson, *Thomas Jefferson and the New Nation: A Biography*, New York/Oxford 1970, p. 745–789; Robert W. Tucker/David C. Hendrickson, *Empire of Liberty: The Statecraft of Thomas Jefferson*, New York/Oxford 1990; Lawrence S. Kaplan, *Entangling Alliances With None: American Foreign Policy in the Age of Jefferson*, Kent, Oh./London 1987.

tion. The taming of the wilderness was defined as a special American experience.<sup>74</sup>

This experience was connected to the strong conviction of a manifest destiny of the American nation to play a special role in history. This theory served as a legitimisation of the expansion of the United States to the Pacific Ocean. This expansion was considered as legitimate, because the United States was a great experiment of freedom. In his novel "White-Jacket" Herman Melville described the Americans as "the special, the elected people", the contemporary Israel, which bore the ark of the freedom of the world.<sup>75</sup>

During the first half of the nineteenth century there was a massive expansion of suffrage. In 1860 every free man had the right to vote. This was considered as

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- 74 Cf. William Earl Weeks, *Building the Continental Empire: American Expansion From the Revolution to the Civil War*, Chicago 1996; Ray Allen Billington/Martin Ridge, *Westward Expansion: A History of the American Frontier*, fifth edition New York 1982; Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Significance of the Frontier in American History*. In: *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1893*, Washington, D.C. 1894, p. 199–227; Ray Allen Billington, *The Genesis of the Frontier Thesis: A Study in Historical Creativity*, San Marino, Cal. 1971; John Mack Faragher (ed.), *Rereading Frederick Jackson Turner: "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" and Other Essays*, New York 1994; Mathias Waechter, *Die Erfindung des Amerikanischen Westens: Die Geschichte der Frontier-Debatte*, Freiburg/Br. 1996; Deborah Madsen, *American Exceptionalism*, Edinburgh 1998; Seymour Martin Lipset, *American Exceptionalism: A Double-Edged Sword*, New York 1996; Gregory H. Nobles, *American Frontiers: Cultural Encounters and Continental Conquest*, New York 1997; Donald K. Pickens, *The Turner Thesis and Republicanism: A Historiographical Commentary*. In: *Pacific Historical Review*, 61 (1992), p. 319–340; Gerald D. Nash, *Historical Commentary: The West as Utopia and Myth*. In: *Montana. The Magazine of Western History*, 41 (1991) 1, p. 69–75; Patricia Nelson Limerick/Clyde A. Milner II/Charles E. Rankin (ed.), *Trails: Toward a New Western History*, Lawrence, Kans. 1991; Mary Ellen Jones, *The American Frontier: Opposing Viewpoints*, San Diego, Cal. 1994.
- 75 Cf. David S. Heidler/Jeanne T. Heidler, *Manifest Destiny*, Westport, Conn./London 2003; George Dangerfield, *The Awakening of American Nationalism, 1815–1828*, New York 1965; Robert N. Bellah, *Civil Religion in America*. In: *Daedalus*, 96 (1967), p. 1–21; Russell E. Richey/Donald G. Jones (ed.), *American Civil Religion*, New York 1974; Julius W. Pratt, *The Origin of "Manifest Destiny"*. In: *American Historical Review*, 32 (1927/28), p. 795–798; idem, John L. O'Sullivan and *Manifest Destiny*. In: *New York History*, 14 (1934), p. 213–234; Anders Stephanson, *Manifest Destiny: American Expansion and the Empire of Right*, New York 1995; Robert W. Johannsen/Sam W. Haynes/Christopher Morris (ed.), *Manifest Destiny and Empire: American Antebellum Expansionism*, College Station, Tex. 1997; Conrad Cherry (ed.), *God's New Israel: Religious Interpretations of American Destiny*, 2. edition Chapel Hill, N.C./London 1998; Frederick Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History: A Reinterpretation*, New York 1963; Herman Melville, *White Jacket*, London/Oxford 1929, chap. 36; Albert K. Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansion in American History*, New York 1979 [1935].

an essential freedom.<sup>76</sup> The consequence of this development was the widening of a democratic public. President Andrew Jackson popularised the conviction that each citizen should be able to occupy a public office.<sup>77</sup>

However, the main focus of this policy was not in Washington but in the local self-administration. Although it was recognised that a certain amount of national politics was needed in order to support the Western expansion and to encourage economic initiatives, the American philosopher and poet, Ralph Waldo Emerson, nevertheless accurately described the Americans as “freedom fanatics”.<sup>78</sup> The obsession with freedom was simultaneously expressed with their hatred of duties, taxes, toll barriers, banks, hierarchy, governors and almost all laws. A weak government proved to be beneficial for the maintenance of private and public freedoms. Freedom was understood as the absence of government from the sphere of personal life. The individual should be able to follow his interest and train his talents without external intervention. Whether they were Democrats or Whigs, as soon as their party was in opposition, the supporting press of both parties forged a connection between freedom and a minimum amount of government. Freedom was ever increasingly connected to a defence of private rights and local interest.<sup>79</sup>

Freedom remained an essential characteristic of the young nation in its self-description. The French noble and political philosopher, Alexis de Tocqueville, published in 1835 his work *Democracy in America*, a descriptive impression of politics and society that he gained during his long travels in the “New World” for the French public. Tocqueville had, as he put it, fallen on a “holy culture of free-

76 Cf. Sean Wilentz, *Property and Power: Suffrage Reform in the United States, 1787–1860*. In: Donald W. Rogers (ed.), *Voting and the Spirit of American Democracy*, Urbana, Ill. 1992, p. 31–41; Chilton Williamson, *American Suffrage: From Property to Democracy, 1760–1860*, Princeton, N.J. 1960.

77 Cf. Robert V. Remini, *Andrew Jackson*, New York 1999; idem, *The Life of Andrew Jackson*, New York 1988; Donald B. Cole, *The Presidency of Andrew Jackson*, Lawrence, Kans. 1993; John William Ward, *Andrew Jackson: Symbol for an Age*, New York/Oxford 1955; Robert V. Remini, *Andrew Jackson and the Course of American Freedom, 1822–1832*, New York 1981; Daniel Feller, *The Jacksonian Promise: America, 1815–1840*, Baltimore 1995; Edward Pessen, *Jacksonian America: Society, Personality, and Politics*, rev. ed., Urbana, Ill. 1978; Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Age of Jackson*, Boston 1945; Harry L. Watson, *Liberty and Power: The Politics of Jacksonian America*, New York 1990; Thomas W. Benson (ed.), *Rhetoric and Political Culture in Nineteenth-Century America*, East Lansing, Mich. 1997; Kenneth Cmiel, *Democratic Eloquence: The Fight Over Popular Speech in Nineteenth-Century America*, Berkeley, Cal. 1990; Bernard K. Duffy/Halford R. Ryan (ed.), *American Orators Before 1900: Critical Studies and Sources*, New York 1987; Daniel Feller, *Politics and Society: Toward a Jacksonian Synthesis*. In: *Journal of the Early Republic*, 10 (1990), p. 135–161; Richard P. McCormick, *The Second American Party System: Party Formation in the Jacksonian Era*, Chapel Hill, N.C. 1966.

78 Cf. Carl Bode/Malcolm Cowley (ed.), *The Portable Emerson*, New York 1981, p. 594 f.

79 Cf. Lawrence Frederick Kohl, *The Politics of Individualism: Parties and the American Character in the Jacksonian Era*, New York/Oxford 1989.

dom".<sup>80</sup> As he later maintained this was deprived of the basis feeling of analysis and must be more defiantly felt. It settles in the heart, fulfils and delights it.<sup>81</sup> Tocqueville had learned that in the United States the great possibility of participation in public life hinders the creation of a tyranny of the majority and with it also the establishment of tyranny and anarchy. At the end of the first volume Tocqueville freely gives a profound criticism of America's civilisation. He wrote that one could not longer quash the people with respect for the laws of humanity.<sup>82</sup> In many statements the Americans congratulated themselves on the won freedom. This was clear in the farewell address of President Andrew Jackson in 1837. Never has a nation of million enjoyed so much freedom and happiness as the United States of America.<sup>83</sup>

This development was accompanied by the market revolution, which was a further democratisation of the economy. A strong component of the idea of freedom was the right to participate in public competition and to have equal access to the market.<sup>84</sup> The market revolution was conditioned by technical innovations in the fields of transport and communication (steam boat, canal, railway and telegraph). They connected the farmer to the national and international markets.<sup>85</sup> At least in the North the consume of factory produced goods also grew. Together with the industrialisation<sup>86</sup> and huge economic growth<sup>87</sup> a complete revolution in the private sphere occurred before the middle of the century.

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- 80 Cf. James T. Schleifer, *Tocqueville and Some American Views of Liberty*. In: Joseph Klaitz/Michael H. Hatzel (ed.), *Liberty/Liberté: The American and French Experiences*, Washington, D.C. 1991, p. 51–69, here 51.
  - 81 Foner, *The Story of American Freedom*, p. 48.
  - 82 Cf. Larry Siedentrop, *Tocqueville*, Oxford 1994; Olivier Zunz/Alan S. Kahan, *The Tocqueville Reader: A Life in Letters and Politics*, Oxford 2002; George Wilson Pierson, *Tocqueville in America*, Baltimore 1996 [1938]; James T. Schleifer, *The Making of Tocqueville's "Democracy in America"*, Indianapolis 2000; idem, *Tocqueville*, loc.cit.
  - 83 Cf. Farewell Address Andrew Jackson to the People of the United States, Harrisburg 1837, p. 16.
  - 84 Cf. Charles Grier Sellers, *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815–1846*, New York 1991; Winifred B. Rothenberg, *From Market-Places to a Market Economy: The Transformation of Rural Massachusetts, 1750–1850*, Chicago 1992; Christopher Clark, *The Consequence of the Market Revolution in the American North*. In: Melvyn Stokes/Stephen Conway (ed.), *The Market Revolution in America: Social, Political, and Religious Expressions, 1800–1880*, Charlottesville, Va. 1996, p. 23–42.
  - 85 Cf. George Rogers Taylor, *The Transportation Revolution, 1815–1860*, Armonk, N.Y. 1989 [1951]; Carter Goodrich, *Government Promotion of American Canals and Railroads, 1800–1890*, New York 1960; Ronald E. Shaw, *Canals for a Nation: The Canal Era in the United States, 1790–1860*, Lexington, Ky. 1990; Sarah H. Gordon, *Passage to Union: How the Railroads Transformed American Life, 1829–1929*, Chicago 1996.
  - 86 Cf. Thomas C. Cochran, *Frontiers of Change: Early Industrialism in America*, New York 1981; Brooke Hindle/Stephen Lubar, *Engines of Change: The American Industrial Revolution, 1790–1860*, Washington, D.C. 1986; Walter Licht, *Industrializing America: The Nineteenth Century*, Baltimore 1995.
  - 87 Cf. Robert E. Gallman, *American Economic Growth Before the Civil War: The Testimony of the Capital Stock Estimates*. In: idem/John Joseph Wallis (ed.), *American*

A mobile population appeared. It dauntlessly seized the new possibilities brought about by the economic changes. The right of participation in public competition and access to the market ever increasingly became the touchstone for American freedom. Freedom and material progress or wealth were now also connected in the public symbolism.<sup>88</sup>

## VI. Slavery, Civil War and Reconstruction

An other expansion of freedom was the abolition of slavery during and after the Civil War 1861–1865. The abolitionists<sup>89</sup> supported the northern principle of “free labour”. According to the principles of the market revolution they were convinced that man should have the right to enjoy the fruits of his labour.<sup>90</sup> Parliamentary restrictions against abolitionists made the argumentation against slavery much easier. The abolitionists could make clear that the system of slavery did not only violate the rights of its victims, but it also threatened the rights of free people.<sup>91</sup> Acts of violence against abolitionists by a fanatical mob proved that slavery threatened the civil rights of White Americans.<sup>92</sup>

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Economic Growth and Standards of Living Before the Civil War, Chicago 1992, p. 79–115.

88 Cf. Arthur Alphonse Ekirch, Jr., *The Idea of Progress in America, 1815–1860*, New York 1944.

89 Cf. James B. Stewart, *Holy Warriors: The Abolitionists and American Slavery*, rev. ed., New York 1997; Dwight L. Dumond, *Antislavery: The Crusade for Freedom in America*, Ann Arbor, Mich. 1961; Louis Gerteis, *Morality and Utility in American Anti-Slavery Reform*, Chapel Hill, N.C. 1987; Ronald G. Walters, *The Antislavery Appeal: American Abolitionism After 1830*, Baltimore 1978; Richard S. Newman, *The Transformation of American Abolitionism: Fighting Slavery in the Early Republic*, Chapel Hill, N.C. 2002.

90 Cf. Thomas Bender (ed.), *The Antislavery Debate: Capitalism and Abolitionism as a Problem in Historical Interpretation*, Berkeley/Los Angeles 1992; Jonathan A. Glickstein, “Poverty Is Not Slavery”: American Abolitionists and the Competitive Labor Market. In: Lewis Perry/Michael Gellman (ed.), *Antislavery Reconsidered: New Perspectives on the Abolitionists*, Baton Rouge, La. 1979, p. 195–218, esp. 207–211.

91 Cf. William Lee Miller, *Arguing About Slavery: The Great Battle in the United States Congress*, New York 1996; Richard H. Sewell, *Ballots for Freedom: Antislavery Politics in the United States, 1837–1860*, New York/Oxford 1976; Russell B. Nye, *Fettered Freedom: Civil Liberties and the Slavery Controversy, 1830–1860*, East Lansing 1949, esp. p. 36–65, 98–104.

92 E.g. Edward Beecher, *Narrative of the Riots at Alton*, New York 1965 [1838]; Joseph Lovejoy/Owen Lovejoy, *Memoir of the Rev. Elijah P. Lovejoy, Who Was Murdered in Defence of the Liberty of the Press, at Alton, Illinois, November 7, 1837*, New York 1938; Curtis, *Free Speech*, chap. 10; Merton Lynn Dillon, *Elijah P. Lovejoy, Abolitionist Editor*, Urbana, Ill. 1961; Paul Simon, *Freedom’s Champion – Elijah Lovejoy*, Carbondale 1994; John Glanville Gill, *Tide Without Turning: Elijah P. Lovejoy and Freedom of the Press*, Boston 1958.

The abolitionists did not only revive the spirit of the Bill of Rights, but placed the universal idea of freedom in the conscience of the Americans once again. In their understanding the right of personal freedom took priority over the right of property and local or regional self-government. They considered slavery as a backslide to hierarchic and non-egalitarian structures. These were traditions that did not appear to be acceptable in the America of the nineteenth century.<sup>93</sup> In 1854 the Republican Party was established. It emphasised the values "free soil, free speech, free labour, free people" and free press.<sup>94</sup>

Among the slaves the desire for freedom was the predominant issue. The mental background of this position was the biblical story of the Exodus. Slavery was seen as a part of the journey of the Black people to the Promised Land of freedom.<sup>95</sup>

The conflicts after the election of Abraham Lincoln<sup>96</sup> as President<sup>97</sup> lead to the Civil War.<sup>98</sup> Lincoln was convinced that slavery violated the essential conditions of American freedom, i.e. personal freedom, the democratic order and the

93 Cf. Scott Douglas Gerber, *To Secure These Rights: The Declaration of Independence and Constitutional Interpretation*, New York 1995; William E. Nelson, *The Roots of American Bureaucracy, 1830–1900*, Cambridge, Mass. 1982, p. 42–50; Clement Eaton, *The Freedom-of-Thought Struggle in the Old South*, Durham, N.C. 1964 [1940].

94 Cf. Robert Allen Rutland, *The Republicans: From Lincoln to Bush*, Columbia, Miss. 1996; William E. Gienapp, *The Origins of the Republican Party, 1852–1856*, New York/Oxford 1987; Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War*, New York/Oxford 1970.

95 Cf. Sylvia R. Frey/Betty Wood, *Come Shouting to Zion: African American Protestantism in the American South and British Caribbean to 1830*, Chapel Hill, N.C. 1998; Albert J. Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The "Invisible Institution" in the Antebellum South*, New York/Oxford 1978; Derek Q. Reeves, *Beyond the River Jordan: An Essay on the Continuity of the Black Prophetic Tradition*. In: *Journal of Religious Thought*, 47 (1990/91), p. 42–54; Erik R. Seeman, "Justise Must Take Plase": Three African Americans Speak of Religion in Eighteenth-Century New England. In: *William and Mary Quarterly*, 56 (1999), p. 393–414; Vincent L. Wimbush (ed.), *African Americans and the Bible: Sacred Texts and Social Textures*, New York 2000; Richard Newman, *Go Down Moses: A Celebration of the African-American Spiritual*, New York 1998; Jon F. Sensbach, *A Separate Canaan: The Making of an Afro-Moravian World in North Carolina, 1763–1840*, Chapel Hill, N.C. 1998; C. Eric Lincoln/Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, Durham, N.C. 1990; Janet Duitsman Cornelius, "When I Can Read My Title Clear": Literacy, Slavery, and Religion in the Antebellum South, Charleston, S.C. 1991.

96 Cf. Mark E. Neely, Jr., *The Abraham Lincoln Encyclopedia*, New York/London 1982; Stephen Oates, *With Malice Toward None: A Life of Abraham Lincoln*, New York 1977.

97 Cf. Reinhard Luthin, *The First Lincoln Campaign*, Cambridge, Mass. 1944; Allan Nevins, *The Emergence of Lincoln*, 2 vol., New York 1950; Allen C. Guelzo, *Abraham Lincoln: Redeemer President*, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1999; Phillip Shaw Paludan, *The Presidency of Abraham Lincoln*, Lawrence, Kans. 1994; James G. Randall, *Lincoln the President*, 4 vol., New York 1945–1955.

98 Cf. Lacy K. Ford, Jr., *Origins of Southern Radicalism: The South Carolina Upcountry, 1800–1860*, New York/Oxford 1988; Steven A. Channing, *Crisis of Fear: Secession in South Carolina*, New York 1970, esp. p. 282–285.



possibility to improve the personal conditions of life.<sup>99</sup> The South fought for the right of self-government, economic independence and security of property.<sup>100</sup> Lincoln initially understood the war<sup>101</sup> as a fight for the continuation of the Union,<sup>102</sup> but with the Emancipation Proclamation of September 22<sup>nd</sup> 1862 the war became a crusade against slavery.<sup>103</sup> Lincoln stated that this was “a new birth of freedom.”<sup>104</sup> Lincoln declared in Gettysburg that freedom and equality were the essential fundaments of American democracy. American soldiers had sacrificed their lives for these ideals.<sup>105</sup>

99 Cf. David Morris Potter, *Lincoln and His Party in the Secession Crisis*, Baton Rouge, La. 1995; Benjamin Quarles, *Lincoln and the Negro*, New York/Oxford 1962; Harry V. Jaffa, *A New Birth of Freedom: Abraham Lincoln and the Coming of the Civil War*, Lanham, Md. 2000; Michael Lind, *What Lincoln Believed: The Values and Convictions of America's Greatest President*, New York/London 2005; David F. Ericson, *The Shaping of American Liberalism: The Debates Over Ratification, Nullification, and Slavery*, Chicago 1993, p. 70 f., 133; Robert W. Johannsen, *The Frontier, the Union, and Stephen A. Douglas*, Urbana, Ill. 1989; Paul M. Angle (ed.), *Created Equal? The Complete Lincoln-Douglas Debates*, Chicago 1958; Robert W. Johannsen (ed.), *The Lincoln-Douglas Debates of 1858*, New York 1965; David Zarefsky, *Lincoln, Douglas, and Slavery: In the Crucible of Public Debate*, Chicago 1990; Herman Belz, *Abraham Lincoln, Constitutionalism, and Equal Rights in the Civil War Era*, New York 1998.

100 Cf. Emory M. Thomas, *The Confederate Nation, 1861–1865*, New York 1979; Jon L. Wakelyn, *Southern Pamphlets on Secession, November 1860–April 1861*, Chapel Hill, N.C. 1996; Charles B. Dew, *Apostles of Disunion: Southern Secession Commission and the Causes of the Civil War*, Charlottesville, Va./London 2001; William C. Davis, *A Government of Our Own: The Making of the Confederacy*, New York 1994; idem, *Look Away! A History of the Confederate States of America*, New York 2002; George C. Rable, *The Confederate Republic: A Revolution Against Politics*, Chapel Hill, N.C. 1994; Charles P. Roland, *The Confederacy*, Chicago 1960; Clement Eaton, *A History of the Southern Confederacy*, New York 1954; E. Merton Coulter, *The Confederate States of America, 1861–1865*, Baton Rouge, La. 1950; Drew Gilpin Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism: Ideology and Identity in the Civil War South*, Baton Rouge, La. 1988.

101 Cf. Victor Austin (ed.), *Der Amerikanische Bürgerkrieg in Augenzeugenberichten*, Düsseldorf 1963; James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, New York/Oxford 2003; Charles P. Roland, *An American Iliad: The Story of the Civil War*, Lexington, Ky. 1991; Bruce Catton, *The Civil War*, 2. edition Boston 1987.

102 Cf. Earl J. Hess, *Liberty, Virtue, and Progress: Northerners and Their War for the Union*, New York 1988.

103 Cf. John Hope Franklin, *The Emancipation Proclamation*, Garden City, N.Y. 1963; Hans Louis Trefousse (ed.), *Lincoln's Decision for Emancipation*, Philadelphia 1975; James M. McPherson, *Abraham Lincoln and the Second American Revolution*, New York 1991; Herman Belz, *A New Birth of Freedom: The Republican Party and Freedmen's Rights, 1861–1866*, New York 2000.

104 Roy P. Basler (ed.), *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, vol. V, New Brunswick, N. J. 1953, p. 537.

105 H. S. Commager (ed.), *Documents I*, p. 428 f.; cf. Mark E. Neely, *The Last Best Hope of Earth: Abraham Lincoln and the Promise of America*, Cambridge, Mass. 1993; Garry Wills, *Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words That Remade America*, New York 1992.

The speech clearly marked the warpath of the North. It was no longer a simple question of protecting the Union but also defending the establishment of freedom and equality before the law for all inhabitants of the United States. Of the constitution, which tolerated slavery, the President directed the attention of the nation back to the Declaration of Independence, which contained the principle of equality.

Lincoln's speech combined a religious with a secular understanding of freedom, which had already been formed in the time of the revolution. This combination also determined the public political culture. The *Battle Hymn of the Republic* even compared the death of Christ for the salvation of humanity with the death of a Union soldier. In this sense the war had become a Christian crusade. The fighters in the North died for the freedom of man. Those, who advocated the vision of America's divine mission, saw the war as God's punishment for the national sin of slavery. This justification was adopted by the otherwise unchurchly Lincoln in his second inauguration speech,<sup>106</sup> after he had won the presidential election in 1864. Lincoln enjoyed, at least since his speech at Gettysburg, the general recognition as the leader of a free republic and as such he became a symbol of freedom.

Both sides of the war linked themselves to the freedom rights, but with limitations. Although there were still free elections and in the North the opposition press could still be printed, in the South hundreds of "Union" supporters were sentenced to imprisonment by military tribunals, many others were violently expelled from their homes and some were even executed in the quick processes. It effected, for example, newspaper publishers or democratic politicians. Their number ran into thousands. Lincoln as the topmost war leader claimed the right to allow arrests to be carried out, even when there was no concrete comprehensible circumstance of guilt for the person in question. In light of the demands, conditioned by the war, for the uniformity of the nation the civil rights became fragile.<sup>107</sup> During the First World War this experience was repeated.<sup>108</sup>

106 Cf. Basler (ed.), *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, vol. VIII, New Brunswick, N. J. 1953, p. 333.

107 Cf. John C. Inscoe/Robert C. Kenzer (ed.), *Enemies of the Country: New Perspectives on Unionists in the Civil War South*, Athens, Ga. 2001; Mark E. Neely, *Southern Rights: Political Prisoners and the Myth of Confederate Constitutionalism*, Charlottesville, Va. 1999; Joel H. Silbey, *A Respectable Minority: The Democratic Party in the Civil War Era, 1860–1868*, New York 1977; Mark E. Neely, *The Fate of Liberty: Abraham Lincoln and Civil Liberties*, New York 1991, esp. p. 52–67, 116–130, 176 f., 206; J. Matthew Gallman, *The North Fights the Civil War: The Home Front*, Chicago 1994; Frank L. Klement, *The Limits of Dissent: Clement L. Vallandigham and the Civil War*, Lexington, Ky. 1970; William H. Rehnquist, *All the Laws But One: Civil Liberties in Wartime*, New York 1998.

108 Cf. e.g. H. C. Peterson/Gilbert Fite, *Opponents of War, 1917–1918*, Madison, Wis. 1957.

After the war the slaves were released,<sup>109</sup> but a real reconstruction of the Southern society failed.<sup>110</sup>

## VII. Conclusion: The “Gilded Age”

The “Gilded Age” (1877–1901), which immediately followed, was an era of far going social changes and modernisation.<sup>111</sup> The Statue of liberty in New York was an expression of the *Zeitgeist*. She symbolised the freedom, which illuminated the world and emanated from a henceforth “completely free” nation.<sup>112</sup> With

109 Cf. Michael Vorenberg, *Final Freedom: The Civil War, the Abolition of Slavery, and the Thirteenth Amendment*, Cambridge 2001; Ira Berlin/Barbara J. Fields a. o., *Slaves No More: Three Essays on Emancipation and the Civil War*, Cambridge, U.K. 1992.

110 Cf. Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America’s Unfinished Revolution, 1863–1877*, New York 1988; Dan T. Carter, *When the War Was Over: The Failure of Self-Reconstruction in the South, 1865–1867*, Baton Rouge, La. 1985; Michael Perman, *Reunion Without Compromise: The South and Reconstruction, 1865–1868*, Cambridge, U.K. 1973; Theodore B. Wilson, *The Black Codes of the South*, Birmingham, Ala. 1965; Daniel A. Novack, *The Wheel of Servitude: Black Forced Labor After Slavery*, Lexington, Ky. 1978; Peter J. Rachleff, *Black Labor in the South: Richmond, Virginia, 1865–1890*, Philadelphia 1984; Jay Mandle, *The Roots of Black Poverty: The Southern Plantation Economy After the Civil War*, Durham, N.C. 1978; Michael Wayne, *The Reshaping of Plantation Society: The Natzech District, 1860–1880*, Baton Rouge, La. 1983; James C. Mohr (ed.), *Radical Republicans in the North: State Politics During Reconstruction*, Baltimore 1976; Allen W. Trelease, *White Terror: The Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy and Southern Reconstruction*, New York 1971; Wyn Craig Wade, *The Fiery Cross. The Ku Klux Klan in America*, New York 1987; David M. Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism: The History of the Ku Klux Klan*, third edition Durham, N.C. 1965; George C. Rable, *But There Was No Peace: The Role of Violence in the Politics of Reconstruction*, Athens, Ga. 1984; C. Vann Woodward, *Reunion and Reaction: The Compromise of 1877 and the End of Reconstruction*, reprint with new foreword, New York/Oxford 1991 [1951]; Michael Perman, *The Road to Redemption: Southern Politics, 1869–1879*, Chapel Hill, N.C./London 1984; William Gillette, *Retreat From Reconstruction, 1869–1879*, Baton Rouge, La. 1979; Joel Williamson, *The Crucible of Race: Black-White Relations in the American South Since Emancipation*, New York/Oxford 1984; Edward L. Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life After Reconstruction*, New York/Oxford 1992; J. Morgan Kousser, *The Shaping of Southern Politics: Suffrage Restriction and the Establishment of the One-Party South, 1880–1910*, New Haven, Conn. 1974.

111 Cf. Mark Wahlgren Summers, *The Gilded Age, or, the Hazard of New Functions*, Upper Saddle River, N.J. 1997; Charles W. Calhoun (ed.), *The Gilded Age: Essays on the Origins of Modern America*, Wilmington, Del. 1996; Robert W. Cherny, *American Politics in the Gilded Age, 1868–1900*, Wheeling, Ill. 1997; Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age*, New York 1982.

112 Cf. Wilton S. Dillon/Neill G. Kotler (ed.), *The Statue of Liberty Revisited*, Washington, D.C. 1994; Marvin Trachtenberg, *The Statue of Liberty*, New York 1977.

the Spanish-American War of 1898 and the entry of the USA in the circle of imperial powers the "American century" began.<sup>113</sup>

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113 Cf. David F. Trask, *The War With Spain in 1898*, Lincoln, Nebr. 1997; Ernest R. May, *Imperial Democracy: The Emergence of America as a Great Power*, New York 1961; Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *Der Aufstieg des amerikanischen Imperialismus: Studien zur Entwicklung des Imperium Americanum 1865-1900*, Göttingen 1974; H. Wayne Morgan, *America's Road to Empire: The War with Spain and Overseas Expansion*, New York 1965; Thomas G. Paterson/Stephen G. Rabe (ed.), *Imperial Surge: The United States Abroad, the 1890s-Early 1900s*, Lexington, Mass. 1992; Philip S. Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism, 1895-1902*, New York 1972; David Traxel, *1898: The Birth of the American Century*, New York 1998; Ivan Musicant, *Empire by Default: The Spanish-American War and the Dawn of the American Century*, New York 1998; David Healy, *U.S. Expansionism: The Imperialist Urge in the 1890s*, Madison, Wis. 1970; Richard E. Welch, Jr., *Response to Imperialism: The United States and the Philippine-American War, 1899-1902*, Chapel Hill, N.C. 1979.